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Adoption of the report of the Committee on its forty-fifth session

Draft report

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Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 (item 4 (b))

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007

1. At its 11th meeting, on 14 June 2005, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered issues related to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 58/269 of 23 December 2003.

2. The Controller made a statement and responded to questions.

Discussion

3. Delegations recalled General Assembly resolution 58/269, by which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to establish new procedures, on a trial basis, for the review of the biennial programme plan, the budget outline and the proposed programme budget. In that resolution, the Assembly requested the Committee, in performing its programmatic role in the planning and budgeting process, to review the programmatic aspects of the new and/or revised mandates approved by the Assembly subsequent to the adoption of the biennial programme plan, as well as any differences that arose between the biennial programme plan and the programmatic aspects of the programme budget. The Committee noted that the Secretary-General had indicated in his note on the proposed biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2006-2007 (A/59/806) that the only new mandate affecting the programme narratives of the approved biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2006-2007[1] (namely, the objectives of the Organization, expected accomplishments of the Secretariat and indicators of achievement) were

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related to safety and security. Consequently, in accordance with established procedure, the Secretary-General submitted a new programme to be included in the biennial programme plan, namely, programme 27, safety and security (ibid.).

4. Views were expressed that the Committee should focus on the new programme for safety and security and not discuss the proposed programme budget, bearing in mind the need to observe the new procedures during the trial period. Furthermore, it was noted that the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 would not be submitted to the Committee for its consideration. The view was also expressed that the General Assembly had not amended the programmatic role of the Committee when it adopted the experiment. In this regard, it was noted that the Committee should continue to consider the programmatic aspects of the proposed programme budget, in accordance with its terms of reference, the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation,[2] and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly concerning the programmatic role of the Committee in the planning and budgetary process. In this context, the view was expressed that the proposed programme budget had been introduced to the Committee in order to enable it to perform its programmatic role and undertake the review called for in paragraph 14 of General Assembly resolution 58/269.

5. Views were expressed that many of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session would have an impact on the programme narrative of the biennial programme plan. It was pointed out, however, that at the time of its review of the biennial programme plan, the Assembly had benefited from the ongoing discussions in other committees of the General Assembly on related issues. Some resolutions requested the Secretary-General to undertake additional work, and/or to deliver additional outputs or to change procedures, and those mandates have been duly reflected in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007. However, there were no new mandates requiring modification of the approved objectives of the Organization, expected accomplishments of the Secretariat or the indicators of achievement, as approved by the General Assembly, with the exception of safety and security.

6. It was noted that a corrigendum to the biennial programme plan had been issued with respect to programme 24, Management and support services, to include a programme narrative for services to the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly and to the Committee for Programme and Coordination.[3]

7. Views were expressed that the overview sections of individual budget fascicles did not contain the same information presented in the overall orientation of each programme in the biennial programme plan. In this connection, the Secretariat pointed out that the overview in the programme budget served a different purpose and was intended to highlight major resource movement and the focus of activities for the biennium, to provide a summary of the number of expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement and of the number of publications, to identify approximate resources for monitoring and evaluation and the level of extrabudgetary resources, and to indicate the distribution of resources of the budget by component. These issues do not appear in the overall orientation for every programme in the biennial programme plan.

8. Views were expressed that the definition of programme narratives set out in paragraph 41 of the foreword and introduction to the programme budget for the

biennium 2006-2007 (see A/60/6 (Introduction)), only applied to the subprogrammes and not the programmes. In this regard, it was noted that regulation 4.5 and rule 104.4 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation clearly define the type of programme information that should be set out in the narratives of programmes and subprogrammes. It was acknowledged that, in implementing paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 58/269, it might be difficult to ensure that the programme narratives of the biennial programme plan and proposed programme budget are identical. Views were thus expressed that the Committee should inform the General Assembly about that difficulty and that it would be easier to ensure that the narratives of the subprogrammes are identical. It was also felt that the Secretariat should be encouraged to make a greater effort to ensure that the narrative of each budget fascicle is similar to that of the related programme set out in the programme plan.

9. With respect to the inclusion in the proposed programme budget, but not in the biennial programme plan, of a component for executive direction and management, together with related objectives, expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement, it was noted that the focus of the Committee's work was on programme, not managerial issues. Views were expressed that logical frameworks for executive direction and management should be included in the next biennial programme plan.

10. Views were expressed that outputs should be terminated in accordance with regulation 5.6 and rule 105.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation and that the relevant intergovernmental bodies should approve such termination. It was noted that a number of specialized intergovernmental bodies had reviewed the programmatic aspects of the proposed programme budget prior to the issuance of the budget fascicles. Attention was also drawn to the fact that annex III to the foreword and introduction to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 (ibid.), which will be submitted to the General Assembly for consideration, provides a review of the identification of activities and outputs that have been completed or become obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 58/270 of 23 December 2003. It was noted that not only had discontinued outputs been indicated in the proposed programme budget (i.e., those that were non-recurrent or had been completed, rationalized, consolidated or terminated by legislative authority), but that the status of delivery of outputs had also been reported in the biennial programme performance report, which is submitted to the General Assembly through the Committee. In the programme performance report, information and the mandate for the changes are provided on outputs that have been added, deleted or modified subsequent to the submission of the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget.

11. It was noted that the General Assembly, in its resolution 58/269, had decided to review, with a view to taking a final decision at its sixty-second session, the format, content and duration of the strategic framework, including the necessity of maintaining part one, and that it had requested the Secretary-General to submit a report, through the Committee at its forty-seventh session, reviewing the experiences gained with the changes made in the planning and budgeting process.

12. It was noted that, in the meantime, the General Assembly, in paragraph 14 of its resolution 58/269, had requested the Committee to provide comments at its current session on the various aspects of the review process referred to with respect to the review of programme narratives of the proposed programme budget. In this connection, the view was expressed that the mandates given to the Committee, as set out in its terms of reference, the regulations and rules of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly concerning the programmatic role of the Committee in the planning and budgetary process, must be fully observed. At the same time, it was noted that any apparent conflict between those mandates and current arrangements reflects the interim status of the new procedures and was not a question of non-compliance.

13. It was confirmed that the only new mandate affecting the programme narratives of the approved biennial programme plan, namely, the objectives of the Organization, expected accomplishments of the Secretariat and indicators of achievement, related to safety and security, as indicated by the Secretary-General in his note on the proposed biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2006-2007.

14. Views were expressed that the General Assembly should consider any further specific issues relating to the narratives of budget fascicles in the context of its review of the proposed programme budget for 2006-2007.

15. Concern was expressed that a number of sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 were not identical in the programmatic parts and had not been issued in time for consideration by the Committee in accordance with regulation 5.7 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, and that since all the sections of the proposed programme budget had not been issued, they had not been exhaustively reviewed by the Committee.

16. While the efforts made by the Secretariat to implement paragraph 9 of resolution 58/269 were recognized, concern was expressed that there were some discrepancies between the programmatic aspects of the sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 and the relevant programmes of the biennial programme plan for the period 2006-2007.

17. Views were expressed that programmatic portions of the budget sections, i.e., the overview of the sections, the objectives of the Organization, the expected accomplishments of the Secretariat and the indicators of achievement in the subprogrammes, should be identical to the overall orientation of the respective programmes of the biennial programme plan.

18. Views were expressed that the programmatic aspects of the sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007, including the overview portions, should be identical to the respective programmes of the biennial programme plan for the period 2006-2007 and should be revised accordingly for consideration by the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly.

19. Views were expressed that in order for the Committee to perform its programmatic role in the planning and budgetary process, adequate time should be

allocated within its programme of work in budget years to both formal and informal sessions.

20. Views were expressed that the General Assembly should approve the programme narrative of section 24, Protection of and assistance to refugees, of the proposed programme budget, subject to the following modifications:

(a) In paragraph 24.4, replace the second sentence with the following: "In this connection, the programme of work includes the implementation of the Agenda for Protection, adopted by Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its fifty-third session, held at Geneva from 30 September to 4 October 2002 (A/57/12/Add.1, annex IV), as well as the actions approved by the Assembly in its resolution 58/153 on strengthening the capacity of UNHCR."

(b) At the end of paragraph 24.2, add the following sentence: "Due attention will be paid to the particular needs and capacities of refugee women and elderly refugees and the special needs of refugee children and adolescents."

21. Views were expressed that the General Assembly should approve the programme narrative of section 18, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific, of the proposed programme budget, subject to the following modification:

In paragraph 18.4, *for* Millennium Development Goals 1, 3, 6, 7 and 8, *read* the Millennium Development Goals.

22. Views were expressed that the General Assembly should approve the programme narrative of section 4, Disarmament, of the proposed programme budget, subject to the following modification:

Replace the last sentence of paragraph 4.2 with the following sentences: "Weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, continue to be of primary concern to the Organization. Conventional disarmament, especially with regard to major weapons systems, small arms and light weapons and land mines, has received growing attention from the international community over the past few years."

23. Views were expressed that the General Assembly should approve the programme narrative of section 16, International drug control, crime prevention and criminal justice, of the proposed programme budget subject to the deletion from paragraph 16.3 of the sentence starting in line 7.

24. In this context, the decisions taken at the 13th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which followed the adoption of the biennial programme plan for the period 2006-2007, were recalled. Bearing in mind that no amendments to the logical framework of subprogrammes 2, Monitoring the Habitat agenda, and 3, Regional and technical cooperation, of section 15, Human settlements, of the proposed programme budget are required, views were expressed that the Secretary-General should submit to the General Assembly proposals for the refinement of the outputs of subprogramme 3 to ensure that the United Nations Human Settlements Programme supports regional institutions, such as the African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development, and the enhanced framework of implementation.

25. Views were expressed that the General Assembly should approve the narrative of subprogramme 2, Services to the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly and to the Committee for Programme and Coordination, of section 28A, Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management, of the proposed programme budget, and that the Secretary-General should include the subprogramme in the revised biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2006-2007.

26. The difference between the programme narratives in sections 28A, Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management, and 28E, Administration, Geneva, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 and programme 24, Management and support services, of the biennial programme plan for the period 2006-2007 was noted. Views were expressed that the Secretary-General should ensure that the logical framework in table 28A.12 of the proposed programme budget is identical to the narrative approved in the biennial programme plan and is submitted to the General Assembly in the context of its consideration of the proposed programme budget.

27. Views were expressed that the Secretary-General should revise section 28E, Administration, Geneva, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 to reflect the indicator of achievement that was omitted from table 28E.10, and submit the revised budget section to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session.

28. The inclusion of a new indicator of achievement in subprogramme 4, Meetings and publishing services (see table 2.19), under Conference Management, New York, of section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 59/275 of 23 December 2004, was noted. Views were expressed that the General Assembly should adopt the revised programme narrative in section 2 of the proposed programme budget and programme 1, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2006-2007.

29. Views were expressed that the General Assembly should adopt the programme narrative of section 33, Safety and security, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 once it has adopted programme 27 of the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2006-2007. It was affirmed that the programme narratives of the subprogrammes of section 33 and programme 27 were identical. Views were expressed that the attention of the General Assembly should be drawn to the revisions made to section 28D, Office of Central Support Services, of the proposed programme budget, as subprogramme 4, Support services, of programme 24, Management and support services, has been replaced by programme 27 of the biennial programme plan.

30. Views were expressed that the General Assembly should consider the programme narratives of the budget sections that were not introduced to the Committee on Programme and Coordination at its forty-fifth session.

31. Regret was expressed that the Secretariat had not fully complied with General Assembly resolution 58/269 when preparing the budget fascicles of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007, and in this regard, regret was also expressed that as a result, many difficulties had been faced during the consideration of the budget fascicles.

32. Views were expressed that table 28A.12 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 should be revised as follows:

Under expected accomplishment (a), the word "consistent" should be replaced by the words "fair and effective".

33. Views were expressed that table 28E.5 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 should be revised as follows:

Under expected accomplishment (c), the word "consistent" should be replaced by the words "fair and effective".

34. Views were expressed that table 28F.6 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 should be revised as follows:

Under expected accomplishment (b), the word "consistent" should be replaced by the words "fair and effective".

35. Views were expressed that table 28G.5 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 should be revised as follows:

Under expected accomplishment (c), the word "consistent" should be replaced by the words "fair and effective".

36. Views were expressed that section 33, Safety and security, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007, should be revised as follows:

(a) Paragraph 33.3: after the words "Department of Safety and Security", insert the words "in full coordination with the host country law enforcement agencies";

(b) Paragraph 33.3 (e): at the end of the paragraph, add the words "taking into account the international character of the Organization";

(c) On page 12, under Subprogramme 1: at the end of the title "Security and safety coordination", add the word "activities";

(d) Paragraph 33.24 (d): at the end of the paragraph, insert the words "in full coordination with the host country law enforcement agencies";

(e) Paragraph 33.24 (h): at the end of the paragraph, insert the words "in full coordination with the host country law enforcement agencies";

(f) Table 33.15, indicator (a) (i): at the end of the indicator, insert the words "in full coordination with the host country law enforcement agencies";

(g) Table 33.15, indicator (b) (i): at the end of the indicator insert the words ", in full coordination with the host country law enforcement agencies".

37. Paragraphs 5 and 6 of General Assembly resolution 59/275 were recalled.

38. Views were expressed that the plan outline should be coordinated at the highest level of the Secretariat.

Conclusions and recommendations

39. **The Committee recommended that the Secretary-General take all legislative mandates fully into account when preparing the strategic framework**

for the biennium 2008-2009 to be submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session, through the Committee at its forty-sixth session.

40. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the narrative parts of sections 1 to 3, 5, 6, 8, 10 to 15, 17, 19 to 22, 25, 26, 29 and 30 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007, subject to the recommendations given below.**

41. **The Committee noted, inter alia, that in sections 4, 16, 18, 24 and 28, the programmatic narratives in the budget fascicles for the biennium 2006-2007, in particular the overview parts, were different from the overall orientation parts in the plan, and recommended that in its consideration of the proposed programme budget, the General Assembly take the necessary action to ensure that these narratives of the budget fascicles, including the overview parts, are identical to the respective programmes of the plan, including their overall orientation parts.**

42. **The Committee recommended that the Secretary-General be requested to ensure that the implementation of the overview parts of the budget sections for 2006-2007 be in full conformity with the overall orientation parts of the biennial programme plan for 2006-2007.**

43. **The Committee recalled that the biennial programme plan for the period 2006-2007 provides the policy framework for the preparation of the proposed programme budget.**

44. **The Committee welcomed the application of the results-based logical framework to the executive direction and management component in several budget sections, and requests the Secretary-General to submit proposals to the General Assembly, in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009, on expanding the logical framework to the above components in the remaining sections of the programme budget, where relevant, with a view to enhancing managerial responsibility for programme implementation.**

45. **The Committee recalled that the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 is only the second budget to include performance targets in the logical framework, which will enable managers to track progress towards the overall direction of their activities and enhance reporting on programme performance. The Committee welcomed the refinements made to the logical framework and recognized that some aspects of the work carried out by the United Nations are less quantifiable than others.**

46. **The Committee also acknowledged that results-based budgeting is still at the early stages of implementation and that further improvements will be required to clarify to what extent the outputs contribute to the attainment of objectives and expected accomplishments. The Committee further stressed the importance of assigning responsibility for the achievement of results to programme managers. The Committee requested the Secretary-General to further develop and strengthen mechanisms to monitor, evaluate and measure the results and impact of programmes and activities.**

47. **The Committee noted that 3,019 outputs were proposed for termination during the biennium 2006-2007. The Committee was informed that in some**

instances, intergovernmental bodies had been involved in the review of the programme of work for the upcoming biennium, which resulted in the discontinuation of several outputs. The Committee welcomed the interaction between programme managers and relevant intergovernmental bodies, which may facilitate the consideration by the General Assembly of the programme of work.

48. The Committee furthermore noted that several resolutions and decisions had been adopted since the preparation and adoption of the biennial programme plan for the biennium 2006-2007. The Committee was informed that the legislative mandates did not require any revision to the programme narratives of the subprogrammes of the relevant sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007. The Committee was also informed that the Secretariat, if necessary, may revise the outputs of subprogrammes in order to ensure the implementation of legislative decisions that were approved after the preparation and adoption of the plan.

49. The Committee recommended that the Secretariat provide the General Assembly, in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007, with a list of outputs that may require either revision to or inclusion in the proposed programme budget due to legislative decisions taken by the Assembly at its fifty-ninth session. The Committee was informed that, in accordance with rule 106.1 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, additional outputs required by a legislative decision subsequent to the approval of the proposed programme budget will be reflected in the programme performance report for the biennium 2006-2007.

50. The Committee, in reviewing the implementation of paragraph 14 of General Assembly resolution 58/269, noted that the programmatic aspects of the narratives of the budget fascicles were not identical to the biennial programme plan.

51. The Committee recommended that in addition to the logical framework, the narratives of the overview parts of budget sections should be identical with respect to programmatic issues to the overall orientation parts of the biennial programme plan, while recognizing that additional budgetary information, where necessary, should be made available in separate paragraphs in the overview part.

52. The Committee recommended that in those budget sections containing parts on policymaking organs, executive direction and management and/or introduction to subprogrammes, unless the same information is already contained in the relevant biennial programme plan, such parts should be limited only to budgetary information and should not be expanded to include programmatic aspects.

53. The Committee furthermore noted that the programmatic narratives of the subprogrammes of budget fascicles were largely identical. The Committee acknowledged that full implementation of paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 58/269 should facilitate its consideration of the programmatic aspects of the budget fascicles in future.

54. **The Committee also noted that the General Assembly had adopted several legislative mandates at its fifty-ninth session. The Committee recommended that the Secretariat submit to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session a list of new and/or revised mandates approved by the Assembly subsequent to the adoption of the biennial programme plan.**

55. **The Committee recommended that in the next proposed programme budget, the Secretariat ensure the implementation of paragraph 12 of General Assembly resolution 58/269.**

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/59/6/Rev.1).

[2] A/58/600.

[3] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/59/6/Rev.1/Corr.1).